a provision that if the death of the worker is due to an accident at the work spot during employment his dependent is eligible to get Rs. one lakh. Similarly, 'The Tamil Nadu construction Workers Welfare Board' has also a provision that in the event of an accident death to a registered construction worker a sum of Rs. one lakh is paid to the nominee of the deceased. The source of funding is cess being levied on the construction projects in the States. The Government of Orissa is yet to constitute such a Welfare Board.

Recommendation of National Labour Commission

1744. SHRI B. J. PANDA:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the recommendations of the Second National Labour Commission;

(b) whether the Commission has recommended sweeping powers to the employers to retrench its workers, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Commission has also dwelt upon Holidays for Government employees and it is proposed to redraw the list of gazetted holidays, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The report of the Second National Commission on Labour has been placed in Parliament library *vide* Rajya Sabha Bulletin No. 40046 dated 27.8.2002.

(b) The Commission has *inter alia*, recommended that prior permission is not necessary in respect of lay-off and retrenchment in an establishment of any employment size. Workers will, however, be entitled to two months notice or notice pay in lieu of notice, in case of retrenchment. In case of establishments employing 300 or more workers where lay-off exceeds a period of one month, such establishments should be required to obtain post facto approval of the appropriate Government. Every employer will have to ensure, before a workers is retrenched, irrespective of the employment size of the establishment, that all dues to the workers are first settled as a precondition to retrenchment.

(c) The Commission has recommended that all the State Governments should have a uniform policy on holidays. Only three national holidays to be gazette, two more days may be added, to be determined by each State according to its own tradition. Apart from these, each person must

be allowed to avail of 10 restricted holidays in a year. Government holidays should be delinked from the holidays under the Negotiable Instrument Act.

Investment of EPF Assets

1745. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) has invested 80 per cent of its assets in a special deposit scheme which is paying only nine per cent interest and the fund would not be able to sustain a 9.5 per cent interest rate and would thus eat its surplus;

(b) whether it is also a fact that he has promised to pay 9.5 per cent interest rate to the EPF subscribers; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to cover up the gap?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) As on 30.09.2002, of the total corpus of Employees Provident Fund, 78.46% has been invested in the Special Deposit Scheme (SDS).

(b) and (c) According to the Central Board of Trustees (Employees Provident Fund), it would be sustainable to fix the rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund for 2002-2003 at 9.5%.

Appointment of Lokpal

1746. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court of India during the cause of a recent judgement under scored the need for appointment of a Lokpal to ensure probity in public life;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) by when the institution of Lokpal is likely to be created and an incumbent put in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) During the course of argument, on 19.8.2002, in W.P. (C) No. 26 of 1995—Common Cause, a Registered Society-*vs*-Union of India and others and upon a query from the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the then Solicitor General informed the status of the Lokpal Bill and the Hon'ble